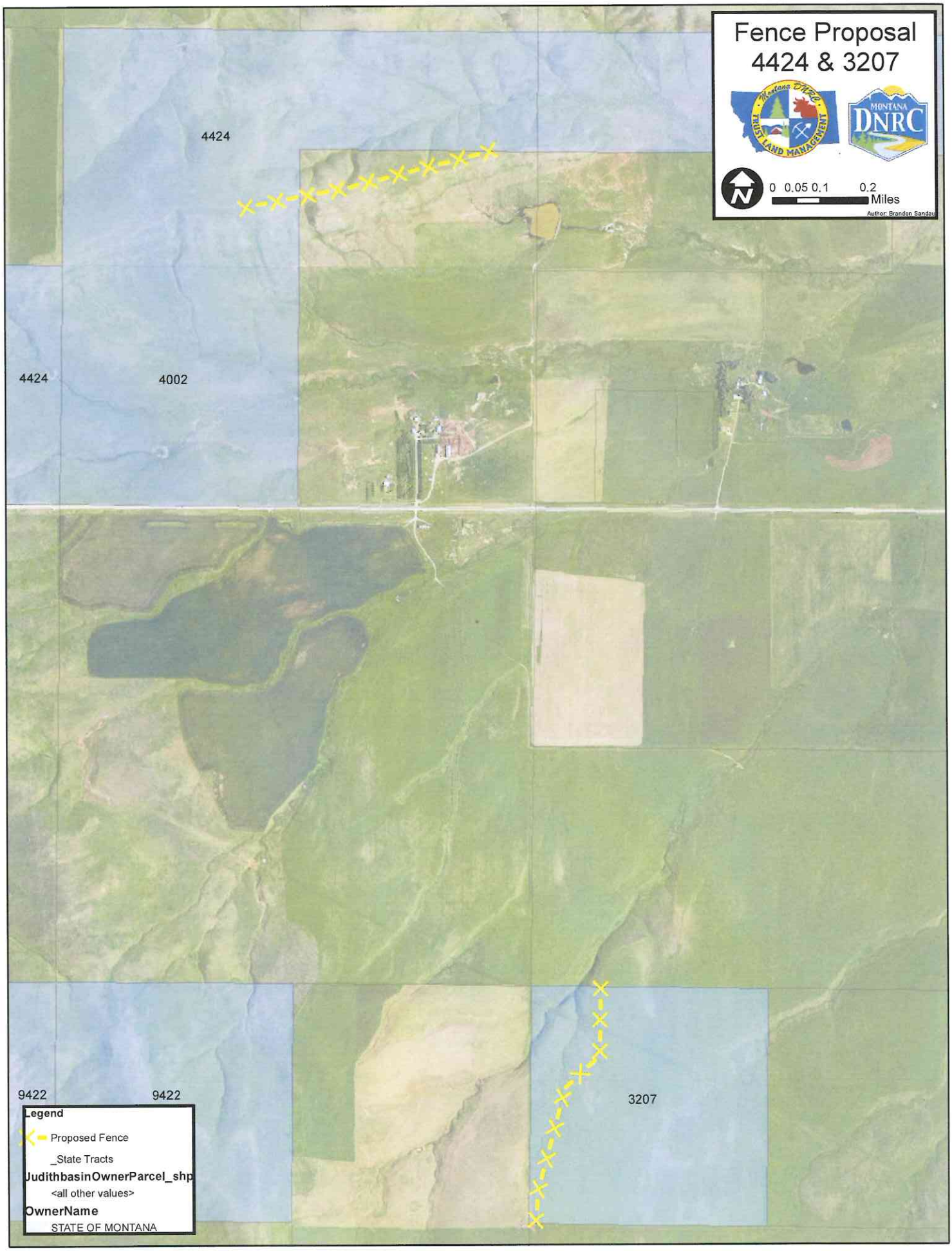

Fence Proposal
4424 & 3207
0 0.05 0.1 0.2
Miles
Author: Brandon Sandau
4424
4424
4002
9422
9422
3207
Legend
Proposed Fence
_State Tracts
JudithbasinOwnerParcel_shp
<all other values>
OwnerName
STATE OF MONTANA

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	**Schweitzer Cross Fence**
Proposed Implementation Date:	2016
Proponent:	Walter Schweitzer
Location:	17N 9E Sec.5
County:	Judith Basin
Trust:	Common Schools & Montana Tech

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Walter Schweitzer has proposed to construct two new fences on state leases 3207 & 4424. Currently there is a permanent electric fence on 3207 and the proponent would like to convert it to a permanent 4 wire fence. A new cross fence is proposed on lease 4424. This fence is aimed at improving grazing distribution. Total fence construction on state land will be 3,450 ft.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Northeastern Land Office (NELO)
Walter Schweitzer (Proponent)

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

The DNRC, and NELO have jurisdiction over this proposed project.

DNRC is not aware of any other agencies with jurisdiction or other permits needed to complete this project

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – The DNRC does not authorize the proponent to construct the fences.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) – The DNRC will authorize the proponent to construct the fences.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Soils in the "Area of Potential Effect (APE)" are a complex Clayey, Silty steep and Draft Shallow. All of these soils have a "slight" rating in regards to off trail erosion. The overflow soils are prone to flooding and increased fence maintenance should be expected.

Erosion Hazard (Off-Road, Off-Trail)

Aggregation Method: Dominant Condition
Tie-break Rule: Higher

Judith Basin Area, Montana
Survey Area Version and Date: 12 - 09/08/2014

Map symbol	Map unit name	Rating	Component name and % composition Rating reasons
Cp	Cheadle stony loam	Moderate	Cheadle 90% Slope/erodibility
Dv	Darret-Utica complex	Moderate	Darret 50% Slope/erodibility Utica 45% Slope/erodibility Cheadle 5% Slope/erodibility
Ff	Fergus clay loam, 4 to 8 percent slopes	Slight	Fergus 90% Terrad 5% Twin Creek 5%
Mb	Maginnis-Absarokee channery clay loams	Moderate	Maginnis 70% Slope/erodibility Absarokee 25% Slope/erodibility Alder 5% Slope/erodibility

The are no unique or unusual geological features in the APE.

See attached documents for location and classification of specific soils.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:
What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Current vegetative community on lease 4424 is a native short grass prairie associated with the following range sites: Clayey, Silty steep and Draft Shallow. There is also a high amount of introduced grass that has invaded. The vegetative community on lease 3207 is tame pasture with smooth brome, orchard grass and alfalfa.

Alternative A (No Action) - No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) – Fence construction produces minimal impact to the vegetative community. No effect anticipated.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) - No effect anticipated.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program for Species of Concern with a state rank of 3 or higher was conducted in the township that includes the area of potential effect. (State rank of 3 means Potentially at risk because of **limited** and/or **declining** numbers, range and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas).

Species of Concern
6 Species
Filtered by the following criteria:
State Rank = S3
Township = [illegible]

SCIENTIFIC NAME / COMMON NAME / TAXA SORT	FAMILY (SCIENTIFIC) / FAMILY (COMMON)	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	[illegible]	[illegible]	BLM	[illegible] THREAT CATEGORY	HABITAT
MAMMALS (MAMMALIA)								2 SPECIES
Lasiurus cinereus Hoary Bat	*Vespertilionidae* Bats	G3G4	S3					Riparian and forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
Myotis lucifugus Little Brown Myotis	*Vespertilionidae* Bats	G3	S3					Generalist
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
BIRDS (AVES)								4 SPECIES
Aquila chrysaetos Golden Eagle	*Accipitridae* Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G5	S3	BGEPA; MBTA; BCC		SENSITIVE		Grasslands
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
Ardea herodias Great Blue Heron	*Ardeidae* Bitterns / Egrets / Herons / Night-Herons	G5	S3					Riparian forest
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
		State Rank Reason: [illegible]						
Buteo regalis Ferruginous Hawk	*Accipitridae* Hawks / Kites / Eagles	G4	S3B			SENSITIVE		Sagebrush grassland
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
Dolichonyx oryzivorus Bobolink	*Icteridae* Blackbirds	G5	S3B					Moist grasslands
		Species Occurrences verified in these Counties: [illegible]						
		State Rank Reason: [illegible]						

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that *Antiquities* have not been identified in the APE. No additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) - No effect anticipated.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- This fence may be visible to highway traffic, especially with the fence markers. Fences are a naturalized piece of our landscape now and no effect is anticipated.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Alternative A (No Action) - No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- State lease 3481 will continue as a grazing lease and no change in grazing utilization or distribution is expected.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Alternative A (No Action) – No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

The majority of hunting is mainly limited to upland game birds. Big game hunting would be minimal with occasional animals passing through.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- Fence construction will not reduce the ability to recreate on this tract. It will create an obstacle to pass, but installed gates will mitigate this for those unable to cross fences.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

Alternative A (No Action)- No effect anticipated.

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative)- No effect anticipated

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:**	Brandon Sandau
	Title:	Land Use Specialist
Signature:		**Date**: July 1, 2016

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

Alternative B (Preferred Alternative) – The DNRC will authorize the proponent to construct the fences.

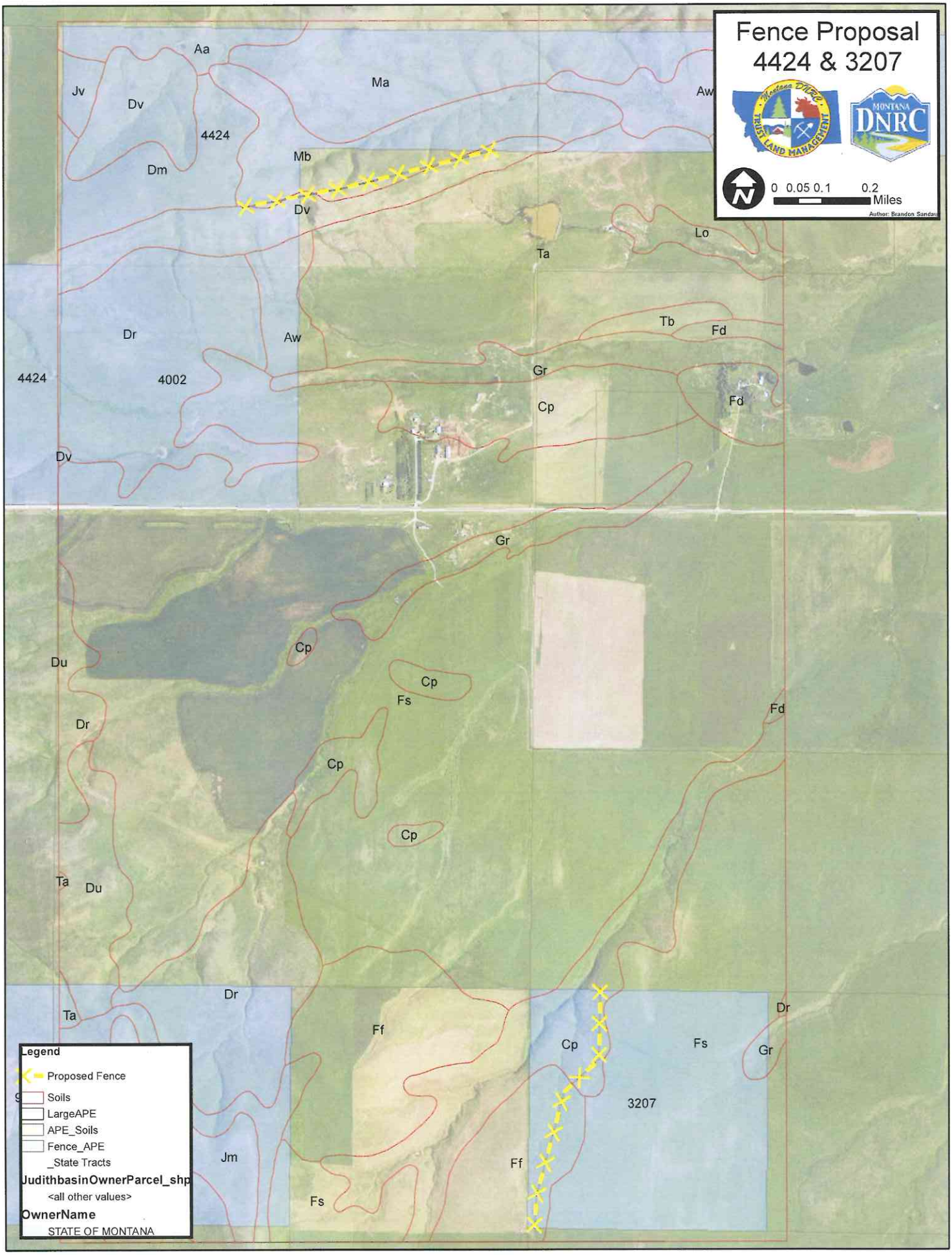
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

The process of completing this EA did not identify any significant potential impacts with the proposed project.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

	EIS		More Detailed EA	XXX	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:**	Barny D. Smith
	Title:	Unit Manager, Northeastern Land Office
Signature:		**Date**: July 1, 2016


Fence Proposal
4424 & 3207
0 0.05 0.1 0.2
Miles
Author: Brandon Sandau
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STATE OF MONTANA

Map Unit Description

Judith Basin Area, Montana

[Minor map unit components are excluded from this report]

Map unit: Cp - Cheadle stony loam

Component: Cheadle (90%)

The Cheadle component makes up 90 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 4 to 35 percent. This component is on escarpments. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from sandstone. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, lithic, is 10 to 20 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is very low. Shrink-swell potential is low. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 3 percent. This component is in the R046XC506MT Draft Shallow (sw) Rru 46-c 13-19" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 7e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 9 percent.

Map unit: Dv - Darret-Utica complex

Component: Darret (50%)

The Darret component makes up 50 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 15 to 35 percent. This component is on escarpments. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from sandstone and shale. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, paralithic, is 20 to 40 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is low. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 3 percent. This component is in the R046XC516MT Draft Silty-steep (sistp) Rru 46-c 13-19" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 6e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 8 percent.

Component: Utica (45%)

The Utica component makes up 45 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 15 to 35 percent. This component is on terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is excessively drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is low. Shrink-swell potential is low. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 2 percent. This component is in the R046XC516MT Draft Silty-steep (sistp) Rru 46-c 13-19" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 7e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 50 percent.

Map unit: Ff - Fergus clay loam, 4 to 8 percent slopes

Component: Fergus (90%)

The Fergus component makes up 90 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 4 to 8 percent. This component is on fans. The parent material consists of alluvium. Depth to a root restrictive layer is greater than 60 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is moderate. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 3 percent. This component is in the R046XC503MT Clayey (cy) Rru 46-c 10-14" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 3e. Irrigated land capability classification is 3e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria. The calcium carbonate equivalent within 40 inches, typically, does not exceed 10 percent.

Map unit: Mb - Maginnis-Absarokee channery clay loams

Component: Maginnis (70%)

The Maginnis component makes up 70 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 8 to 35 percent. This component is on hills. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from sandstone and shale. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, lithic, is 10 to 20 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is very low. Shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 3 percent. This component is in the R046XC506MT Draft Shallow (sw) Rru 46-c 13-19" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 7e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.

Map Unit Description

Judith Basin Area, Montana

Map unit: Mb - Maginnis-Absarokee channery clay loams

Component: Absarokee (25%)

The Absarokee component makes up 25 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 8 to 25 percent. This component is on hills. The parent material consists of residuum weathered from sandstone and shale. Depth to a root restrictive layer, bedrock, lithic, is 20 to 40 inches. The natural drainage class is well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is moderately high. Available water to a depth of 60 inches is low. Shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 5 percent. This component is in the R046XC508MT Draft Silty (si) Rru 46-c 13-19" P.z. ecological site. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 6e. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.